

Message Text

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FOR EAGLEBURGER FROM S/PRS - BROWN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: GELB PIECE ON "TOWN MEETINGS"

NO. 17

1. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF AP (GEORGE GEDDA) STORY ON
GELB ARTICLE ON "TOWN MEETINGS."

"AN INFORMAL STATE DEPARTMENT INQUIRY ABOUT AMERICAN
ATTITUDES HAS DISCLOSED WIDESPREAD PUZZLEMENT ABOUT THE
BASIS OF US FOREIGN POLICY, AND A YEARNING FOR A MORE
IDEALISTIC APPROACH TOWARD LESS FORTUNATE COUNTRIES.

"THE SURVEY, MADE AT THE REQUEST OF SECRETARY OF STATE
HENRY A. KISSINGER, WAS BASED ON FIVE 'TOWN MEETINGS' ARO
THE COUNTRY EARLIER THIS YEAR. THE PUBLIC IN EACH LOCALE
WAS INVITED TO DISCUSS WITH TOP STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL
SUCH ISSUES AS AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION,
THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THE ROLE OF VALUES IN FOREIGN
POLICY.

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"ONE PREVALENT THEME WAS THAT DESPITE 112 NEWS CONFERENCES

AND SCORES OF APPEARANCES BEFORE CONGRESS AND AROUND THE COUNTRY, KISSINGER OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS HAS BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN A BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF HIS POLICY GOALS "AFTER A VISIT TO PITTSBURGH, THE FIRST OF FIVE CITIES ON THE LIST, KISSINGER AIDES REPORTED THAT 'THE DEPARTMENT AS A WHOLE HAS NOT COME TO GRIPS WITH A FAIRLY SERIOUS COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM.'

'THEY SAID THAT PART OF THE PROBLEM STEMS FROM THE COMPLEXITY AND AMBIGUITY OF MODERN-DAY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

"IN PITTSBURGH, THEY SAID, 'MANY SEE US ACTING IN SEEMING CONTRADICTORY WAYS, BOLSTERING THE SOVIET ECONOMY BY SELLING WHEAT AND TECHNOLOGY EVEN AS WE PROTEST AND OPPOSE THE SOVIET ROLE IN ANGOLA.

""SINCE WE APPEAR TO PITTSBURGHERS TO BE ACTING AT CROSS PURPOSES, THERE IS BEWILDERMENT AS TO WHAT THE COUNTRY STANDS FOR.'

"THE APPARENT AMBIGUITY IN OFFICIAL POLICY ALSO WAS REFLECTED IN ATTITUDES SURVEYED AT A TOWN MEETING IN MINNEAPOLIS WHERE 61 PER CENT OF THE RESPONDENTS TO A POLL AGREED THAT 'WE CANNOT TRUST THE RUSSIANS.' BUT ONLY 19 PER CENT FAVORED AN OUTRIGHT BAN ON TRADE WITH THE SOVIETS.

"IN ADDITION TO PITTSBURGH AND MINNEAPOLIS, TOWN MEETINGS WERE HELD IN PORTLAND, ORE., SAN FRAN-ISCO AND MILWAUKEE IN EACH CITY, PARTICIPANTS FELT A MORE IDEALISTIC APPROACH TOWARD POLICY IS WARRANTED. FOR EXAMPLE, IN 'TOWN MEETING' POLLS TAKEN IN SAN FRANCISCO AND PORTLAND, THE RESPONDENTS AGREED THAT 'STOPPING WORLD HUNGER DESERVES A HIGHER PRIORITY THAN 'STOPPING THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM.'"

2. WASHINGTON STAR, SEPTEMBER 16, CARRIED GELB PIECE FROM NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE, BUT INCLUDED FINAL PARAGRAPH WHICH HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES UNCLASSIFIED

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VERSION. THIS PARAGRAPH READS AS FOLLOWS:

"A STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT KISSINGER FOUND THE 'TOWN MEETING' REPORTS USEFUL, AND THAT HE HAD MADE NO EFFORT TO KEEP THE RECORDS OF THE SESSIONS CONFIDENTIAL. THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT MANY COPIES OF THE REPORT HAD BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM."

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